

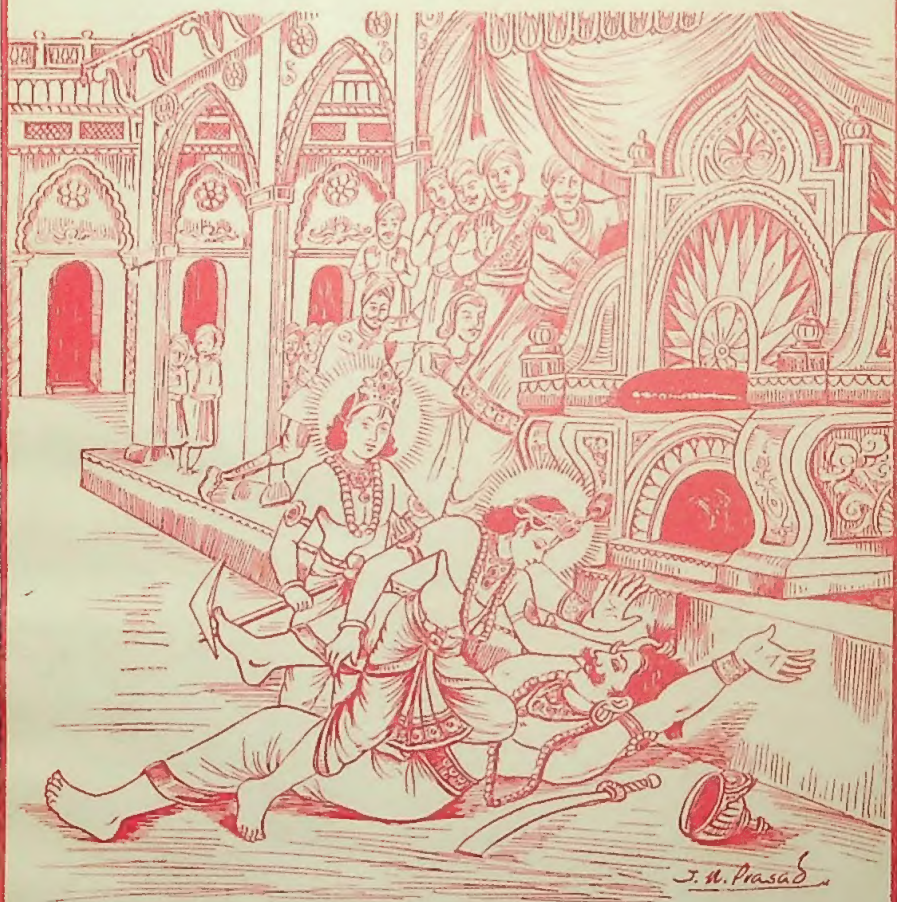
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The

KALYANA-KALPATARU



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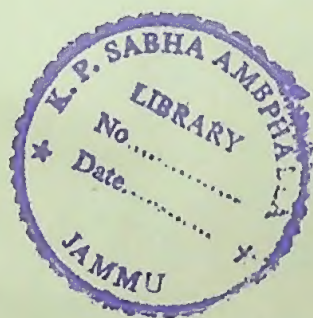
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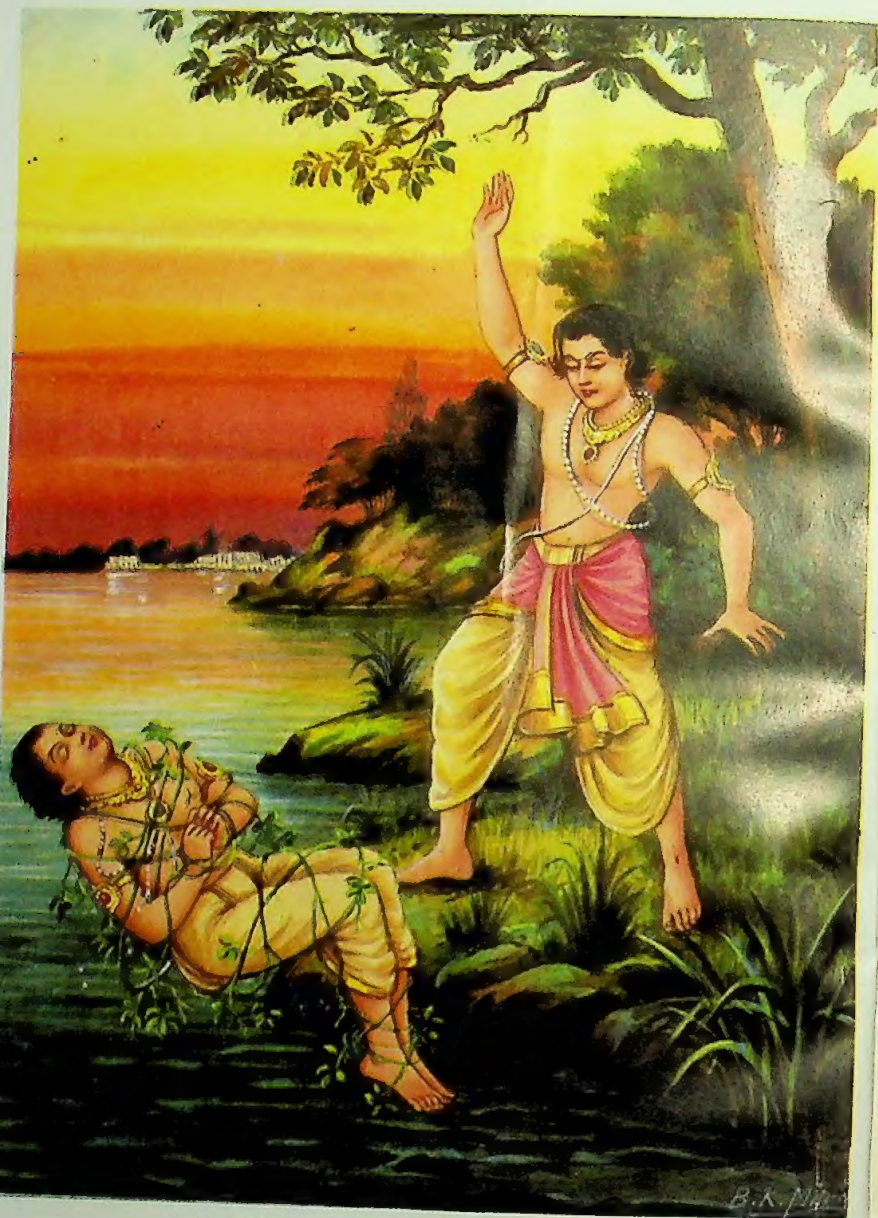
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(5) Bhīma thrown in the river

ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात्पूर्णमुदच्यते । पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥



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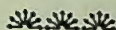
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Vol. XLI

ततो बद्ध्वा लतापाशैर्भीमं दुर्योधनः स्वयम् ।
मृतकल्पं तदा वीरं स्थलाज्जलमपातयत् ॥

"Afterward Duryodhana himself tied Bhīma (the bravest among braves) who was almost dead, with the strings made of creepers, and threw him in the waters from the (dry) ground."

(Mahābhārata Ādi Parva 127.54)



Intensity of Spiritual Practice

—Late Sri Jayadayal Goyandka

Just as the process of respiration goes on without interruption and knows no pause, the striving for God-realization should continue day and night without remission. He who is incessantly and habitually engaged in adoration and meditation is sure to attain blessedness. For the Lord Himself says in corroboration of this truth—

यं यं वापि स्मरन् भावं त्यजत्यन्ते कलेवरम्।
तं तमेवैति कौन्तेय सदा तद्भावभावितः॥

(*Gītā* VIII. 6)

"Arjuna, thinking of whatever entity one leaves the body at the time of death, that and that alone one attains being ever absorbed in its thought."

Nay, the Lord goes on to declare that He is easily accessible to him who is constantly engrossed in His thought.

अनन्यचेताः सततं यो मां स्मरति नित्यशः।
तस्याहं सुलभः पार्थ नित्ययुक्तस्य योगिनः॥

(*Gītā* VIII. 14)

In a couple of verses immediately preceding the above, the Lord has already indicated the means of controlling the senses, the mind and the vital airs. Such a practice can very well be pronounced as exceedingly difficult; *Yogīs* alone can undertake it. As for constant remembrance of God, anyone and everyone can practise it. "Think of Me at all times and fight,"* says the Lord.

* मामनुस्मर युध्य च। (*Gītā* VIII. 7)

Of course, steadfastness is most essential for carrying on this practice. If a man does not succeed in realizing God during his lifetime even through diligent practice, he is sure to do so at the last moment.

The mind, speech and body—all these three should be employed in carrying on one's *Sādhana*. The body should be employed in rendering service to others, the mind should be devoted to meditation and the organ of speech, should be employed in muttering the Divine Name. No action should be performed with the motive of attaining worldly objects; everything should be done as a duty (*Gītā* II. 47). Whenever the striver is reminded of God, he should take it as a great favour of God and should feel transported with joy. Similarly he should bitterly rue the moment when God slips out of his memory, and should shudder to think what a sorry plight he would have been reduced to, had he met his end that very moment.

We should go in for all-round improvement. If we visit a temple, we should entertain a very high notion of the image enshrined therein. We should look upon the latter as superior to the decorations surrounding it. Mental worship is more valuable than external worship. Therefore, installing a mental image of the Deity in the heart, one should go on worshipping it with articles of one's own imagination. This practice should continue at all times and one should get absorbed in it. One should repeatedly remember the divine virtues of God, such as compassion, forbearance, equanimity, impartiality and so on.

One should contemplate on the loving nature and glory of God. As a lover God has no compeer. As for glory, whatever there is glorious, brilliant and powerful should be regarded as a spark to the Lord's glory (*Gītā* X. 41). Thus perceiving His glory in everything one should offer praises and prayer to Him and meditate on Him. Of these

three practices again, meditation is the most valuable. When there is no one equal to God, how can anyone excel Him? A striver should offer praises to Him on the above lines. He should only pray that he may remain ever engrossed in His sweet thought and remembrance and may ever continue to behold His divine sports. It should, however, be noted in this connection that the *Rāmalīlā* that we witness is only an external imitation of Śrī Rāma's divine play. In the same way we should select all the *Līlās* depicted in the *Rāmacaritamānasa*, for instance, meditate on them and behold them with our mental eyes. The *Caupāīs* bearing on those beautiful episodes should be memorized in order to facilitate meditation on and mental perception of the divine sports. This constitutes an excellent and easy way of practising meditation and fixing the mind on God. A large proportion of man's time is being constantly frittered away in idle thought. On his addressing himself to this practice, however, the mind gets a good occupation by way of reflection and contemplation. This constitutes the most remarkable feature of this practice.

The mind should be kept fully engaged in such pursuits, it should be allowed no respite for indulging in any other thought. The *Gītā*, the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Bhāgavata* should form the constant objects of his study. Turning away from other vain pursuits of the livelong day, one should remain engaged in such occupations only.

The main obstacle which slackens our practice, which arrests the progress of our *Sādhana*, is our attraction for sense-objects. Hence we should carefully eliminate our attachment to worldly objects. Viewing the world and its objects as perishable, ephemeral and sorrowful, we should divert our mind from them and cultivate dispassion. Repeated practice and dispassion are the only means of subduing the mind. Even if it is urged that the generality

of men do not feel inclined to undertake such practices, we for our part should take to them without fail, minding not what others do.

The striver should note one thing more in this connection, viz., that human nature has an innate tendency to lapse into sin. That is why an attempt to encourage the demoniac propensities in men begins to bear fruit immediately, whereas the noble and good work of popularizing the divine virtues bristles with great difficulties. Realizing this he should be ever vigilant and should not waste a single moment. He should never remain idle. An empty mind falls an easy victim to error, sloth and other vices. Hence so long as the mind does not get emptied of worldly thoughts and fixed on God, there is grave risk for him.

One should raise a crop of the Divine Name. The Divine Name is the seed which should be sown in the soil of the heart. The thought-current of the mind represents water. This thought-current is ever flowing in the direction of the ocean of worldly existence. Stemming its flow in that direction the field of the heart has to be irrigated thereby as a field of paddy. Even as the flow of the mind is diverted from that channel and directed towards this field, the latter will begin to thrive. A field of paddy requires an abundant supply of water. It gets dry if we cease watering it. But the field of which we are speaking here never gets dry; that is the speciality of it. Nevertheless the process of watering it should never be discontinued. We should go on watering it at all times. That is our paramount duty. And when there is no occupation higher than this, what else should be done? This alone should be persevered in.

Through this process of continually watering the field when the tiny plants of paddy get mature and are crowned with ears, or in other words, as we begin to develop a

taste for adoration of God, association with holy men, meditation, dispassion and self-abnegation etc., the field should be scrupulously guarded against destructive birds in the shape of lust, anger, honour and fame etc. Extra vigilance is needed at this stage. We should always be on our guard lest we may be lost in their lovely and sweet warbling, and our ripening crop may be destroyed by them.

For quickening the speed of our *Sādhana* disinterestedness is most efficacious. This latter ensures speedy success. We have grown very selfish; that is why we are not making rapid progress in our *Sādhana*. In every matter and at every step we are guided by self-interest. If we get something from the market for our family consisting of say, five members, we shall feel inclined to have the best of the lot for ourselves. If our property is partitioned, we shall try to appropriate the better share. While travelling by rail we try to secure a more comfortable seat for ourselves. Although we soar high in our professions, our eyes, like those of a vulture, are directed towards nasty things. This accounts for our abject degeneration. Hence we can gain much if we attend to our worldly duties in a disinterested spirit.

A man of scanty means should not imagine that only moneyed men can practise self-denial and that he is incapable of it. Had it been so, God-realization would be open to the wealthy alone. In the majority of cases, however, the reverse only is true. The more material resources one possesses, the more self-centred he is. Taking note of the above facts, therefore, everyone should improve one's *Sādhana* and accelerate its progress.



Real Education

(Continued from page 973)

—*Swami Ramsukhdas*

Question—Should a student participate in games and sports or not?

Answer—The students should take part only in such games which may be capable of improving their physique and intellect. They should play only for the sake of physical exercise. They should not form a team or group in other words nothing should be done which may lead to conflict. By making a team, the intellect which could have otherwise been engaged in planning self-advancement could be diverted to slighting and belittling others, that will cause a great harm. Cards and dices should never be played. In other words a student should not indulge in such games which are not helpful in body building or mental development, which may generate tendency towards carelessness, lethargy and lustfulness and which are simply a means for killing time. In nutshell a student should be very very careful while participating in games and sports.

Question—What should a student do for his amusement?

Answer—A student should amuse himself in learning itself, mutually discussing certain topics, asking questions and getting answers can provide a good entertainment. New things and ideas spring up from such discussions. The students should not entertain themselves from cinema, T.V. etc. These devices are injurious for eyes and mind and they create bad impressions which on their turn hinder the study,

prayer or meditation. There is no use in filling the mind and senses with rubbish.

Question— What is the right way to gain knowledge?

Answer— While attending the class-lectures the students should look at the eyes and facial gestures of the teacher and listen to whatever he teaches sentence by sentence attentively and hold it avoiding all other thoughts. He should not entertain the idea that I am more prompt in learning than others. Such sense of pride will reduce the knowledge to ignorance and enhance the pride.

The student should repeat the lesson time and again without any help from the book. This will make the knowledge ready at hand. He should study the book in such a way that he might be in a position to teach others without any hitch. To study does not make the book as much mastered as the teaching does.

The student should remain humble and modest before his teachers and others because the knowledge leads to humility—“विद्या ददाति विनयम्”.

Question— What is the way to learn a subject by heart?

Answer— In the tender age the student memorizes the verses (*Ślokas*) first and then he comes to appreciate the meaning. But in advanced age memorising becomes easy only after knowing the meaning.

Morning hours are most appropriate to memorize something as a lesson is easily learnt at this time. Therefore a student should get up at 03.00 or 03.30 and after doing the morning duties, washing hands, feet and mouth should start memorizing the lessons. While learning a verse he should memorize the first foot and then second. Then first and second together. Then third foot and then the fourth. Then third and fourth together. Then he should reproduce without the help of the book from first foot to the fourth. After that the next verse should be memorized in the

foresaid manner. After that first and second both the verses should be reproduced without the help of the book. Then he should undertake the third, fourth and so on. In this way he should complete the daily quota of memorization and leave it at that. Then again before going to bed one more repetition of the lesson without book and go to sleep and then in the morning when he gets up he should recite the lesson once again. This way he would be able to learn the verses easily and quickly.

Newly memorized lesson should be reproduced three or four times a day without book for three or four days and once in a day those lessons, which have been memorized sometimes back. This way the students should form habit of revising the subjects without books. If he goes on depending on the books he is liable to forget even the subject already learnt.

There is another way for memorizing. The subject which you want to learn by heart, go on reciting once a day for one complete year. After a year you should try to reproduce it without the help of book. When you fail to do so open the book and memorize the portion concerned completely and then should go ahead. This way when the entire book is on the tip of the tongue, you should make at least one recitation a day without book. By doing so the book will be ready at hand. If you again start taking help of the book you may forget whatever you have learnt by heart.

Question—What are the ways to improve the memory?

Answer—Observing celibacy is a very good way for the purpose. By stopping the wastage of semen and through its preservation a unique type of vigour is generated which develops the intellect. An elephant has enough of physical strength but invigorating energy is found more in a lion because the lion sexually indulges with the lioness only once in the whole life. Therefore a lion has more energy due to the

preservation of semen. The same way with the observance of celibacy the student may develop the same unique vigour which is capable of sharpening his intellect inculcating the qualities like enthusiasm, courage and peace etc.

The less desire for worldly enjoyment a man has got, the more helpful it is in the observance of celibacy. The sound, the touch, the form, the taste and the smell—these five plus praise and honour provide *Rājasika* comfort. Carelessness, lethargy and sleep give *Tāmasika* pleasure. Renouncing *Tāmasika* and *Rājasika* pleasure is quite helpful in observing celibacy.

A deep study of good books is also a way for sharpening the intellect. Exclusive desire for God-realization and the deep devotion also are the causes of intellectual development. Because this sincere devotion is generated by and related to one's own self, so it naturally leads to self-restraint. When once a man fixes his target to be God-realization he becomes *Sthitaprajña* (of stable wisdom), his intellect is determinate and consequently it becomes more keen to grasp the subject.

By using certain medicine like cow milk, ghee, *Brāhmī*, the sweet *Vaca*, *Śaṅkhapusṇī* etc., intellect develops. The worship of Śiva, Ganeśa and Saraswatī also are the other means. The manner of worship is as follows—

Every night at eleven o' clock in a lonely place sitting on a woollen carpet facing towards north-east one should mutter "ॐ नमः शिवाय" counting on rosary of *Rudrākṣa* covering a number of one hundred twenty *Mālās*. By doing so for six continuous months (without a break) the intellect is developed and the desired goal is achieved side by side. If it is practised on the bank of some river or so and keeping the feet dipped in the water, greater success is achieved.

This *Anuṣṭhāna* should start on the thirteenth day of the dark fortnight. It is excellent if it begins on *Śivarātri*. It can be started on any Monday particularly in the month

of *Śrāvaṇa* (in July—August). Before starting this *Anuṣṭhāna* (religious undertaking) Lord Śiva should be worshipped in a proper way. While on the *Anuṣṭhāna* one should observe fast on every *Pradoṣa* day (when *Trayodaśī* is available during the twilight period). On the fast day one should take fruits or milk only once in the day. But care should be taken not to overstuff the stomach. In such case it will be better to take light food twice.

Everyday in the morning after finishing the morning duties one should sit on a red carpet facing east and on a rosary of *Rudrākṣa* or coral one should recite “ॐ गं गणपतये नमः” at least twenty one *Mālās*. By practising so for six months continuously one can develop his intellect. One should start this *Anuṣṭhāna* on a bright fourth day. If this is started on the same day in the month of *Bhādrapada* it is better. In the beginning of *Anuṣṭhāna* Lord Gaṇeśa should be worshipped and during the *Anuṣṭhāna* period a fast should be observed on every bright fourth day. One can develop his intellect by reciting *Gaṇeśa Stotra*, *Gaṇeśāṣṭaka*, *Gaṇeśa Sahasranāma* etc.

Every morning one should sit on a red carpet and red garments on his body facing the east, and should recite the *Mantra* “ऐं श्रीसरस्वत्यै नमः” on a rosary of *Rudrākṣa* or coral. The number of *Japa* recommended is 101,51,21 or 11 *Mālās* at the least. This way after approximately a year the intellect gets full development.

This *Anuṣṭhāna* should start on the 8th or 9th day of bright fortnight. In the beginning the goddess Saraswatī should be worshipped with red flowers.

Immediately after rising in the morning one should imagine that ‘ऐं’ is written on his tongue. Mentally visualizing this ‘ऐं’ on the tongue he should recite the same 108 times. This also develops the intellect. Whether Śiva,

Gaṇeśa or Saraswatī one should select one of the three and perform his *Anuṣṭhāna* by declaring his desire (*Saṅkalpa*)—"I am going to do this for the sake of my intellectual development" 'बुद्धिवृद्ध्यर्थं क्रियते मया'.

By doing monthly recitation (12 recitations in a year) of *Rāmacaritamānasa* for one year one can get his intellect developed. If *Rāmacaritamānasa* recited everyday once or one recitation is made during the period of nine days, 108 recitations of this book is helpful in intellectual development. In addition to this the *Sādhaka* gets special type of affinity with God established.

All the *Anuṣṭhānas* enumerated above may be used for achieving specific objects also.

Above all, divine name and its recitation is par excellent. It is the very life, the vital air for the bride of learning—"विद्यावधूजीवनम्". Through the *Japa* of divine name some sort of uniqueness appears in a man—so is the experience of many saints and exalted persons. There was a *Vairāgī* monk. He once visited Tryambakeshwar (Nasik) on an occasion of *Kumbha*. There was a gathering of scholars debating and discussing certain spiritual topics and were trying to come to some conclusion. The monk interrupted the discussion. Some of the scholars said—"O *Bābā!* This is a scholarly debate among the scholars quite beyond your approach. Go and count your rosary. The monk was really illiterate. The monk got irritated. He went to a jungle, built a hut and started muttering "*Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma.*" Due to the effect of *Japa*, he became an expert speaker in *Saṁskṛta*. A Pundit has written somewhere—"I was going to Dwaraka. I lost my way and went astray in the jungle. By chance I reached a hut of a monk. The monk talked with me in *Saṁskṛta*. I enquired about his education he narrated his life history and said that as an outcome of *Nāma Japa* he could study several *Saṁskṛta* books and at that time he was studying *Advaita Siddhi*.

Therefore a student should always remember the divine name and do *Japa* and *Kīrtana*.

(1) **Nāma Smaraṇa**—Only mental remembrance of divine name is called *Smaraṇa*.

(2) **Nāma Japa**—It is of three types—

(a) Muttering the divine name mentally is termed as *Mānasa Japa*. The lips and throat do not make any movement and the sound does not come.

(b) When the tongue moves but the sound does not reach the eardrum then the *Japa* is called *Upāṁśu*.

(c) The *Japa* while speaking audibly is the ordinary one. The ordinary, *Upāṁśu* and *Mānasa* are ten times more effective than the previous one.

(3) **Kīrtana**— It is some sort of chanting divine name accompanied by musical instruments. It is also of three types.

(a) The chanting of divine name with musical instruments in an orchestral way is *Nāma Kīrtana*.

(b) Describing the quality of God, singing songs in the praise of God, reciting *Ślokas* containing the merits of the Lord is known as *Guṇa Kīrtana*.

(c) Singing songs, containing childlike pastimes of the Lord is known as *Līlā Kīrtana*.

Out of the three—remembering name, muttering name and chanting name—the best is that for a particular person in which his mind is absorbed.

Question— What divine name should a student mutter?

Answer— A student should mutter the divine name in which he has more faith, belief and love. The name which could attract his mind and heart, in which he gets absorbed is more useful. So he should adopt the same.

Question— What should be duties of a student to his teachers?

Answer— A student should have a reverential attitude to the teacher as he has to his parents. Nowadays the teacher may

hail from any caste. If he is a Brahman and has imparted good education to him, the student should entertain the same reverence to the teacher throughout his life. If he is non-Brahman and belongs to the lower class, in that case the student should have the same respect in the education period. After finishing the education he should feel grateful to the teacher no doubt, but the attitude of reverence is not necessary.

Question— These days the teachers are changed in every period. So which of them should he treat as a *Guru*?

Answer— It should be proportionate to the knowledge imparted by the teachers. Of course the sense of gratitude must be there for everybody.

There are three sources of attaining knowledge—

गुरुश्रूषया विद्या पुष्कलेन धनेन वा ।

अथवा विद्यया विद्या चतुर्थं नैव कारणम् ॥

By rendering service to the teacher, by paying money or by exchanging the knowledge one can attain the knowledge. Apart from these three there is no other means.

If there is a scholar who wants to impart knowledge to others without any return from the student, one can obtain knowledge from him also. But in such case the student will be indebted to the teacher. When he himself becomes a scholar and gets famous and the teacher feels happy on his achievement, in that case the debt should be treated to have been repaid. By imparting the same knowledge to other students he could be free from indebtedness. The idea is that just as we cannot repay the debt from our parents, we can get it only written off by propitiating them. Similarly the debt of a selfless teacher cannot be repaid. It can be got written off by propitiating him.

If there is a strong urge in a student for attaining knowledge, God helps him in some way or the other. He provides a *Guru* to him—“जेहि कैं जेहि पर सत्य सनेहू। सो तेहि मिलइ न कछु संदेहू॥”. The Lord is universal teacher—“कृष्णं वन्दे जगद्गुरुम्.” One can attain knowledge by reciting the divine

name only. Once a saint could not find a grammar teacher. So Patañjali himself taught him *Mahābhāṣya*. Śukadeva himself taught *Bhāgavata* to Caranadāsa.

Question—With whom should a student cultivate friendship?

Answer—A student should have friendship with his colleagues who are sincere in learning, lovers of knowledge and enthusiastic in studies, who may offer on occasions a prop to others. Insincere student should be avoided as far as possible. But at the same time a sincere student should make every possible effort to bring other wayward boys on the right track. He should particularly be careful to his own studies.

Question—What are the duties of a student to his friends?

Answer—He should treat them in a way conducive of their ultimate good by renouncing his self-interest and sense of pride. He should entertain an idea of his friends becoming noble and scholarly so that he may try to supersede them in learning and wisdom. In other words if the other students do not progress, his own advancement will be stopped. He will have no desire for that. He will be satisfied even in his state of stagnation and his advancement will be marred. On the contrary if the friend goes ahead he himself may develop a competitive spirit and will try sincerely to surpass others. Therefore a student should always be well-wisher of his friends and should feel happy at their progress.

He should treat his friends as Lord Kṛṣṇa treated Sudāmā. It has come in *Rāmāyaṇa*—

कुपथ निवारि सुपथ चलावा । गुन प्रगटै अवगुनन्हि दुरावा ॥
देत लेत मन संक न धरई । बल अनुमान सदा हित करई ॥
बिपति काल कर सतगुन नेहा । श्रुति कह संत मित्र गुन एहा ॥

(*Mānasa* IV.7.2-3)

Question—What are the filial duties of a student?

Answer—Every student—secular or spiritual—must please his parents because the parental pleasure is very much

helpful in learning. The scriptures say—

अभिवादनशीलस्य नित्यं वृद्धोपसेविनः ।
चत्वारि तस्य वर्धन्ते आयुर्विद्या यशो बलम् ॥

(Manu.. II. 121)

One who respects his elders and renders services to them gets his life-span, knowledge, fame and power—enhanced. Even if the parents due to some exigency of some domestic work ask him to postpone temporarily his study, he should convince them that it is very important that he should not disrupt his study as examination time is approaching fast and so on. During the examination period if he has to wake nights after nights he should do so. Very often it is observed that the parents particularly the mother feels worried if the child wakes during night more than necessary it may fall sick. But really it is not so. If there is an urge from within, the waking does not have an adverse effect. Of course if the boy against his wishes, is compelled to wake throughout the night there is every chance of his falling sick.

Great are those who do not abandon the job undertaken by them even if the obstacles repeatedly come—"विघ्नैः पुनः पुनरपि प्रतिहन्यमानाः प्रारभ्य चोत्तमजना न परित्यजन्ति". The job once undertaken must be completed beautifully and promptly. Doing so develops in a man a habit of doing everything successfully and achieving victory. It is such men who become great and ideal. Therefore a student should form such habits.

A student should have courage and enthusiasm in him. He should welcome both the success as well as failure with equal patience and enthusiasm. This way a student while learning the secular knowledge performing his duties can attain efficiency in other worldly and spiritual learning. The Lord has said—"असक्तो ह्याचरन्कर्म परमाप्नोति पूरुषः" (Gītā III. 19). "Performing duties in a selfless way the striver attains the Supreme."



Beating Wife—A Great Sin

—Late Sri Hanumanprasad Poddar

Our domestic life is a mixture of sweet and stringent experiences. Sometimes when the couple are in a jolly mood the home looks like heaven but on occasions one of them loses temper. On such occasions it is the wife who mostly suffers. The husband utters some harsh words. If the wife tolerates and swallows it, a mishap is avoided. But if she retorts, the husband is sometimes enraged and slaps the wife. Eventhough afterwards he repents but the done is done. It cannot be undone. So a tension creeps in the smooth running of family affairs. We all know that beating a wife is a great sin on the part of husband because she is helpless, is wholly dependent on her husband. She can do nothing in exchange of the harsh treatment apart from being sad or weeping or if she is sharp of tongue she will say some harsh words, that is all. As a matter of fact one should not be angry towards any person whosoever. Anger is the greatest enemy. Primarily it burns him who entertains it. Then comes the number of the victim when it expresses itself through words or actions etc. Therefore a wise man for his own good should entirely give up anger. But if it at all comes, in that case there is some propriety if it comes for a person of equal strength. But if the victim of one's anger is weaker or does not possess strength for retaliating, has got no other way except being sad and weeping silently. To hurl our anger on such a person is the limit of meanness and cowardice. However

the same happens. Only the weak persons are the subject of our anger but wife is the co-partner with equal status.

Even ignoring her, is a sin what to talk of beating. Beating a wife is a great sin. We can overpower her with real love, good behaviour and sweet salutary words. There is no harm if some harsh words are used for her own good without any element of anger but at the same time one should do sufficient introspection. The very essence of *Dharma* is said as under—

आत्मनः प्रतिकूलानि परेषां न समाचरेत्।

"Never behave with a person in the way you would not like yourself to be behaved".

If somebody uses bitter words how would you relish it? If not, what right have you got to use such words for others, abuse them or beat them?

I most humbly request everybody that if he is in the habit of beating his wife, he must refrain himself from this act. One must swear not to commit such mistake. We know that we repent afterwards. It itself is an indication that we recognise the impropriety of the act. As we feel that beating a wife is improper, well, it should not be very difficult to give up this habit for well and good. As far as possible, even pinching words should be avoided because bitterness is retaliated by bitterness and it increases the bitterness, at least such are the chances.

The ladies are also requested to have a control over their words. They should not use in any case any harsh words. They are advised to keep mum if they think that they are incapable of practising restraint. If they can exercise mastery over the situation they may afterwards convince their husbands with modesty and sweet words. If it is adopted I think there would be no chance of recurrence of such nasty occasions.



Giridhārīlāla

—Wanderer

My Giridhārīlāla
My Kṛṣṇa Gopāla,
Be thou to me in all my births,
Dear as my life, nay, dearer far,
And let me live on thy love,
My Giridhārīlāla.

Ever elusive thou art,
Slipping away from grasp,
A thief that stole my heart,
My Giridhārīlāla.

My ever-fickle friend,
Yield thyself up
To my cord of love,
And let me so bind thee
Hand and feet,
That thou escapest not—
O! My Giridhārīlāla.

My caste and lineage high,
Woman's honour dear, body and soul,
I've given thee all,
My Giridhārīlāla.

Love me as thou didst love
Rādhikā, Rukmiṇī—avowed queens,
Nay, give me a taste of thy secret love,
And love me as thou loved
Brindaban's *Gopīs*—on the sly,
My Giridhārīlāla.



Death and How to Meet It

—R. Narayana Iyer

Death is simply a change of body and environment. There is no death for the soul: "ममैवांशो जीवलोके जीवभूतः सनातनः". The *Jīvātmā* is part and parcel of the *Paramātmā* and is imperishable. It is a ray of the Eternal Light. But it is deluded by *Māyā* or Ignorance (अज्ञान). The physical body and everything connected with it, i.e., wealth, children, friends, status, caste etc., are separated from us. But the subtle body, the seventeenfold aggregate consisting of the mind, the ten *Indriyas*, the five *Prāṇas* and *Buddhi*, does not perish until the time of final liberation. The *Jīva* in the subtle body, which is an offshoot of 'अज्ञान' (ignorance) just in the same manner as the physical body, is an extension of the subtle body, goes to the subtler regions after death, enjoys or suffers the fruits of its past *Karma* in the higher worlds. These higher worlds interpenetrate the physical worlds even as the subtler organs mind, *Indriyas*, *Buddhi*, etc., interpenetrate the physical organs of ours. The *Jīva* after living in the higher worlds for some time is reborn on the earth in families according to its past *Karma* and tendencies. This *Samsāra* goes on unending until its ignorance is destroyed and then it becomes free and one with the Eternal. Good actions produce good results and sinful actions produce bad results. Good actions performed for the sake of enjoyment on earth or heaven will not directly secure liberation. They may lead to it by making the mind pure. But the final goal is reached only

by knowledge and disinterested work. There will come a time in the life of every man when health fails, old age stares in the face, wealth dwindles, friendship cools and popularity fades. These are the harbingers of death. Those who lived a rich and fortunate life and have many-sided cravings and attachments suffer much more than the poor and wretched at the time of death. Goldsmith says—"The wretched have had a long familiarity with every face of terror. The man of sorrows lays himself quietly down without possessions to regret and few ties to stop his departure. He feels Nature's pang only in the final separation and this is no way greater than he had fainted under before. For after a certain degree of pain, every new breach death opens in the constitution. Nature kindly covers with insensibility." Animals, most ignorant men and *God-men* or great wise men have no mental pangs—

यश्च मूढतमो लोके यश्च बुद्धेः परं गतः ।

तावुभौ सुखमेधेते क्लिश्यत्यन्तरितो जनः ॥

(*Bhāgavata* III. 7.17)

How to meet death boldly is a problem with wise men.

(1) Consider *Dharma* and Truth as essential objects of life but not possessions or what happens in life.

(2) The satisfaction of having performed one's duty to the best of one's ability will produce peace of mind.

(3) Belief in a future life and in the existence of God, who is the distributor of rewards and punishments for good and bad actions.

(4) *Vairāgya* or non-attachment for worldly possessions realizing that they are transient or at best only a means to do one's *Dharma*.

(5) By surrendering our will to the Will of God. Our will is simply an instrument in the hands of God. God plays His *Līlā* through us. But we do not realize it. We are arrows and God is the Archer. We cannot escape from the Cosmic Law.

(6) Constant meditation and prayer. Reading books that describe the glories of God and God-men with devotion, books like the *Gītā*, *Rāmāyaṇa*, *Bhāgavata* and other *Purāṇas*, stories of true *Bhaktas* etc., will produce *Vairāgya* (non-attachment to the world).

(7) Company of true *Sādhus* or *Sāttvika* men will enable us to acquire discriminative knowledge, self-control and peace of mind.

(8) Purely *Sāttvika* and moderate food, observance of fasts, enduring the pairs of opposites (द्वन्द्व) such as heat and cold, pleasure and pain, honour and dishonour etc., compassion and gifts to deserving men, etc., will lessen the fear of death.

Now I shall give examples of some great men of ancient days who challenged death boldly by their unflinching devotion to Truth, *Swadharma*, faith in God and dispassion.

(1) King Hariścandra sacrificed his kingdom, wealth, family and everything for the cause of Truth. When Viśwāmitra begged on his knees and assured him that he would get back his kingdom and everything if he would utter a single lie, he refused to part with his precious wealth, i.e., Truth.

(2) King Parīkṣit drank the nectar of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's story from the lips of Śuka and when the time of death approached concentrated his mind on the Lotus Feet of the Lord. He did not know that the snake bit him. He was completely absorbed in meditation.

(3) Bhīṣma fought bravely for duty's sake, placed his body and prowess at the disposal of Duryodhana but his mind, calm and serene, was dedicated to the friend of the Pāṇḍavas.

(4) Abhimanyu, encircled and overpowered by his enemies, never thought of surrender but gave up his life as a true warrior and ascended the solar regions.

(5) King Śibi was faced with a conflict of duties. He

was bound as a *Kṣatriya* to give protection to the dove and at the same time he could not interfere with what nature had assigned to the hawk as its food. He solved the problem by giving his own flesh to the hawk.

(6) Satyavān and Sāvitrī tied together by spiritual bonds of love could not be separated. When Yama took Satyavān to his abode, she too followed the god of Death. Yama tried his best to stop her but could not. In the end he yielded to her wishes and her husband was restored to her.

The aforesaid examples are enough to prove that there existed in ancient times in our *Āryāvarta* men who had defied death with a strong faith in the superiority of *Dharma* over the transient pleasures of the world. They ascended the higher regions of heaven to enjoy everlasting Bliss.

But real conquest of death can be brought about only by God-realization by means of exclusive devotion to God (एकान्त भक्ति) or by knowledge (ज्ञान) of one's self by elimination of the unreal.

तमेवं विद्वान् अतिमृत्युमेति ।



Take my life and let it be
Consecrated, Lord to Thee,
Take my heart and let it be
Full saturated, Love, with Thee.
Take my eyes and let them be
Intoxicated, God, with Thee.
Take my hands and let them be
Engaged in sweating Truth for Thee.

—Swami Rama Tirtha

Worship of Śrī Hari Fulfils All One's Desires

सर्वान् कामानवाप्नोति समाराध्य जगद्गुरुम्।
तन्मयत्वेन गोविन्दमित्येतद् दाल्भ्य नान्यथा ॥

"Duly worshipping Lord Govinda, the preceptor of the world, with a mind full of Him one attains all one's desired objects. O Dālbhya!"

(*Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa*)

हेराराधनं पुंसां किं किं न कुरुते बत।
पुत्रमित्रकलत्रादि राज्यं स्वर्गापवर्गदम् ॥

"Ah, what does the worship of Śrī Hari not secure to mankind—sons, friends, wife and so on, sovereignty included. Nay, it confers on them heavenly bliss and (even) final beatitude."

(*Skanda Purāṇa, Kāśī Khaṇḍa* 21.53)

आराध्य विधिवद् देवं हरिं सर्वसुखप्रदम्।
प्राप्नोति पुरुषः सम्यग् यद् यत् प्रार्थयते फलम् ॥

"Worshipping according to the scriptural ordinance Lord Śrī Hari, the bestower of all blessings, a man fully obtains whatever reward he seeks."

(*Garuḍa Purāṇa, Pūrva Khaṇḍa* 226.49)

मनीषितं च प्राप्नोति चिन्तयन् मधुसूदनम्।
एकान्तभक्तिः सततं नारायणपरायणः ॥

"Thinking of Lord Viṣṇu (the destroyer of the demon Madhu) with exclusive devotion, constantly looking upon Him as his highest goal, a man attains the object sought for."

(*Mahābhārata, Śānti Parva* 348.71)

यद् दुर्लभं यदप्राप्यं मनसो यन्न गोचरम्।

तदप्यप्रार्थितं ध्यातो ददाति मधुसूदनः ॥

"Contemplated upon (by His devotees), Lord Viṣṇu bestows on them unsolicited not only that which is hard to obtain, but also that which is impossible to attain (even) that which lies beyond the ken of the mind."

(*Garuḍa.*, *Ibid.* 222. 12)

तमहमुपसृतानां कामपूरं नतोऽस्मि।

"I bow to Him, who fulfils the desires of those who approach Him for protection."

(*Śrīmad Bhāgavata* 8.12.47)

या वै साधनसम्पत्तिः पुरुषार्थचतुष्टये।

तां विना सर्वमाप्नोति यदि नारायणाश्रयः ॥

"A man, if he depends on Lord Nārāyaṇa, attains everything (even) without that wealth of *Sādhana* essential for acquiring the four objects of human pursuit."

(*Līṅga Purāṇa*)

अकामः सर्वकामो वा मोक्षकाम उदारधीः।

तीव्रेण भक्तियोगेन यजेत पुरुषं परम् ॥

"A wise man, however—whether he has no desire at all or is actuated by all sorts of desires or seeks liberation (final beatitude)—should worship the Supreme Person with intense devotion."

(*Śrīmad Bhāgavata* 2.3.10)



Though I am never loath to grant salvation,

I hesitate indeed to grant pure love.

Whoever wins pure love surpasses all;

He is adored by men;

He triumphs over the three worlds.

—*Sri Ramakrishna*

Gaurāṅga

(Continued from page 1018)

—Akula Rajendra Babu

Talks to a washerman—

Gaurāṅga with his companions came to a washerman who was beating the clothes upon a piece of plank. Gaurāṅga asked the washerman to say *Hari Bola*. The washerman thought that the mendicants have come to beg alms from him. He said to Gaurāṅga. Oh mendicant! I am a washerman and am very poor. I have nothing to offer and give you. "Gaurāṅga replied that he wants nothing from him. Say '*Hari Bola*' only once."

The washerman refused to do so bluntly thinking that he has to pay something in return to the mendicant. He said again and again I am very poor. I cannot give up beating the cloth in order to utter the name you have given thereby causing much delay in the work. Gaurāṅga told him that he would do the beating in his place but he must say '*Hari Bola*'. The washerman said '*Hari Bola*'. Gaurāṅga asked him to repeat again. The washerman repeated thrice. The fire of devotion was kindled. The washerman repeated the name unasked. He began to dance in ecstasy raising both his hands high and chanting '*Hari Bola*'.

After sometime as usual the wife brought some food to the washerman at mid day. She noticed that her husband was dancing with uplifted hands uttering '*Hari Bola. Hari Bola.*' She further noticed that her husband had no consciousness of his surroundings. She wanted to rouse him from calling at the top of her voice, but in vain. She

was very much perplexed. She ran to the village speedily and said to his relatives and neighbours. A ghost has taken possession of my husband, please help me. Drive away the ghost from him. The village folk on hearing her words came to the place. They saw the washerman and one of them prevented him from dancing. He too caught the contagion and began to dance uttering '*Hari Bola Hari Bola!*' alongwith the washerman. He also embraced the onlookers. They too caught the contagion and danced in ecstasy. The people of the whole village were affected. Gaurāṅga enjoyed the scene and left the place.

Pilgrimage—

Caitanya alongwith his friend Nitāi started for Orissa. Wherever Caitanya went he preached only Vaishnavism and held *Saṅkīrtana*. Thousands of people were attracted. Sometime he stayed at Puri and journeyed to the South. Gaurāṅga also visited Tirupati the sacred shrine of Lord Veṅkaṭeśwara, Conjeevaram and Srirangam on the banks of Kāverī. Later he visited Udipi, Pandharpur and Nasik. From there he visited Brindavan. He bathed in river Jamunā and several other sacred spots and visited the shrines. In almost all the places where he went, he prayed and danced in ecstasy to his heart's content. Then he returned to his native place. He came to Puri and settled down there. Most of his last days he spent at Puri. Disciples and admirers from all parts of Bengal and Brindavan flocked together to pay their respects and homage to Śrī Gaurāṅga. He held discourses and *Kīrtanas* daily.

A Miracle—

A miracle happened at Puri. At the festival of Jagannātha the temple car would not move an inch. All the pilgrims and devotees tried their level best to pull the car. All their efforts proved futile. The gigantic elephants of the Rājā of Puri were brought to the scene of occurrence to pull

the car. This also had no effect and proved a failure. All the pilgrims were in a state of despair. Gaurāṅga came to know this. He pushed the car by his head. Lo! the car moved at once. The pilgrims rent the air with the sound of 'Hai Bola.'

Sārvabhauma converted—

Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya was a great vedantic scholar. One day in ecstatic mood Gaurāṅga went to the temple of Jagannātha rushed to embrace the Lord but fell down on the ground in a deep swoon. The guard on duty was about to beat Gaurāṅga. The Minister of the King Pratāpa Rudra of Orissa, the learned scholar Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya removed Gaurāṅga to his house and put him down on a clean spot. While Gaurāṅga's pupils carried him on their shoulders, the disciples uttered the name of Kṛṣṇa loudly in the ears of Gaurāṅga. Gaurāṅga came back to his consciousness.

Sārvabhauma had neither devotion nor realization but yet he was only half-baked and a dry pundit. Gaurāṅga was a great scholar yet he was so simple and humble. Gaurāṅga would not indulge in loose talk that may wound the feelings of others nor feel elated when he gets victory in his debates. Gaurāṅga criticised the arguments of Sārvabhauma one by one and brought him to his fold slowly. Gaurāṅga embraced Sārvabhauma. The latter fainted in an ecstasy of divine joy. He then rose and danced. He prostrated at the feet of Gaurāṅga and implored. "Oh Venerable Master" Logic had made my heart as hard as iron. I did not have the least tinge of devotion. Thou hast moulded me. Forgive me.

Gaurāṅga converted all the leaders of *Advaita* and the heads of *Vaiṣṇavas* who came under his fold. The two eminent personages of Benares were also converted. The ministers of the king of Gour were puffed up with pride.

Their pride was humbled down. *Kāzī*, the Governor was conquered. The king of Orissa had become an ardent disciple. He recognised that Gaurāṅga was an *Avatāra* of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Leper healed—

A brahmin by name Vāsudeva was very humble, pious and good-natured. He suffered from leprosy. On account of the abominable stench emitting from his body, he was forced to live apart from his friends and relatives. He used to put up maggots that dropped from the sores to put them back in their places. Vāsudeva had extreme compassion and had equal vision. He believed in one eternal truth that every living creature had an equal right to live and that he had no right to deprive them (the worms) of their natural food. What a wonderful and magnanimous heart he had!

Vāsudeva lived in the vicinity of the temple of *Kūrma* at Jagannātha. He heard that Gaurāṅga had arrived one night at the temple of *Kūrma*. To see him Vāsudeva went to the temple next morning. Providence proved otherwise. Gaurāṅga had already left the place half an hour earlier. On seeing this, he burst in tears and fell down in a faint for disappointment and sorrow exclaiming as he fell! O Lord Kṛṣṇa! Hast thou forsaken me?

At that time Gaurāṅga was passing that way he heard the pitiable cry of Vāsudeva and ran towards the temple. He lifted up the leper in his own arms and embraced him and Lo! the leprosy disappeared and he became a changed being with a nice body, sound and beautiful. Vāsudeva implored. "Oh Lord! Thou hast embraced me. All the people fled from me for the stench of my body. I came here to pay my humble homages to Thee and see Thy lotus feet. I never had the least idea of coming here to get myself cured. The loathsome malady has taught me to be as humble and compassionate and to remember the Lord at

all times. This healthy body will generate pride in me and I will soon forget the Lord."

Gaurāṅga consoled Vāsudeva and said. You have the grace of Lord Kṛṣṇa. You will never have the vanity again to puff yourself with pride. On account of your extreme humility Lord Kṛṣṇa has accepted you due to your loving all living creatures even to those worms which fed upon your own body. Repeat Lord's name and also make others to repeat Kṛṣṇa's name.

Kīrtana at Śrībāsa—

A sincere devotee was Śrībāsa who had devotion to Lord Kṛṣṇa. The first *Śaṅkīrtana* was held in the courtyard of Śrībāsa continued daily at the same house. *Caitanya Bhāgavata* was written by his grandson.

One night a grand *Kīrtana* was proceeding. In great joy Gaurāṅga and *Bhaktas* were dancing. During that period a maid servant of Śrībāsa entered and made some signal for him. Śrībāsa left the *Śaṅkīrtana* and followed the maid servant. He found that his only son was suffering from cholera and was in a dying condition. His wife was weeping. Śrībāsa consoled his wife by saying—"This will interrupt and disturb the joy of the Lord. It is a great good fortune that our Lord is doing *Kīrtana* in our house." In a short time the soul of the boy left the body.

He did not stay in the house and left. Śrībāsa joined the party. He was not in the least perturbed and affected. The news could not be kept a secret but reached the ears of the *Kīrtanists*. They stopped the *Kīrtana* abruptly. Gaurāṅga also stopped the *Kīrtana*. Gaurāṅga said how is it that I could not experience much joy today as I used to experience previously. Has any calamity or catastrophe happened today. He looked at Śrībāsa with a pained heart.

Śrībāsa replied. "Can I have any calamity when the Lord is doing *Kīrtana* in the house?" Another devotee

interrupted and said that a calamity really had happened. He mentioned that the only son of Śrībāsa was dead. Gaurāṅga said—"When was his son dead? Six or seven hours before" came the reply. Gaurāṅga burst into tears. Gaurāṅga asked Śrībāsa to bring the child at once and place before him. The body of the child was brought and placed before Gaurāṅga. Gaurāṅga addressed the dead child and commanded him to speak. Lo! the boy spoke. "I am leaving the body for better existence. Oh Lord! May my soul cling to Thy lotus feet." The soul again left the body of the child. Gaurāṅga then said to Śrībāsa and his wife Mālinī "Oh Mother! "Nītāi will take the place of your departed child. Be not troubled. Be not anxious. "What a large and magnanimous heart Gaurāṅga had."

Six handed Divinity—

The followers of Gaurāṅga believe that Gaurāṅga had six handed divinity. It is said that Sārvabhauma saw Gaurāṅga with six hands. The first two hands were provided with bow and arrow, the second two with flute being played upon and the last two with *Daṇḍa* and *Kamaṇḍalu*. He made by this manifestation Nītāi to understand that he was both Rāma as well as Kṛṣṇa.

Jumping into the sea—

Gaurāṅga was in a fit of ecstatic devotion he jumped into the sea at Puri. He imagined that the blue sea was Jamunā. He wanted to join hands in the frolics of the *Gopīs* of Brindavan. Gaurāṅga was observing fast and vigil he was in an emaciated condition. His body floated on the waters and fell into the net of a fisherman. It was night. The fisherman was extremely joyous when he found that the net was too heavy. He thought that he had caught a big fish. He somehow dragged it to the shore. To his utter surprise, he found a human body instead of a big fish in the net. He was much disappointed and was perplexed. The

lifeless body made a faint sound. The fisherman thought that it was a goblin or a ghost. He was greatly frightened and slowly walked along the shore with his trembling feet. The two disciples of Gaurāṅga Swarūpajī and Rāmānandajī who were searching for their master from sunset met the fisherman. Swarūpa asked him if he had come across Gaurāṅga Deva anywhere. The fisherman narrated the whole incident. Swarūpa and Rāmānanda went to the place where the net was lying. They took out the master from the net and placed him on the ground. They sang the name of Hari loudly. Gaurāṅga gradually came to consciousness.

Last parting words—

The last words of Gaurāṅga—"Listen O Swarūpa Rāmānanda Rāja! The chief means of attaining Kṛṣṇa's holy feet is the chanting of Kṛṣṇa's name without break in *Kaliyuga*. *Saṅkīrtana* of the name is the supreme healer in the iron age and *Saṅkīrtana* tantamounts to the *Vedic* sacrifice. *Saṅkīrtana* destroys sins and purifies the heart and creates *Bhakti*. Chant the name while sitting, standing, eating or in bed or anywhere. The name is omnipotent. There is no restriction nor any rule. The name can be repeated anywhere and in any place.

Gaurāṅga said to Swarūpa and Rāmānandajī about the mental attitude in which the name should be recited.

"Hari's name should be repeated by one who must be humbler than a blade of grass which is patient and which does not beg for water even when scorched to death, but on the other hand, offer its treasure to whosoever seeks it, bears the sun and rain itself but protects those who take shelter under it from rain and sunshine, who howsoever worthy of esteem should, instead of claiming respect for himself, give respect to all (from a sense of Gods immanancy in all beings). He who thus takes Kṛṣṇa's name, gets *Kṛṣṇa-Prema*. Lord Gaurāṅga became more humble

in spirit (and recited the following *Śloka*:

"Oh Lord." I do not crave either for wealth or followers or for poetic genius. May my motiveless devotion to Thee continue in me whenever I take birth.

On 14th June 1533 Gaurāṅga attained Kṛṣṇa's feet.

चेतोदर्पणमार्जनं भव-महा-दावाग्नि-निर्वापणम्।
 श्रेयः कैरव-चन्द्रिका विवरणं विद्यावधू जीवनम्॥
 आनन्दाम्बुधिवर्धनं प्रतिपदं पूर्णामृतास्वादनम्।
 सर्वाङ्गस्त्रपनं परं विजयते श्रीकृष्ण संकीर्तनम्॥

"Glorified above all is the eternity of the various names of Kṛṣṇa, which cleanses the mirror of *Citta*, which extinguishes the great forest fire of the succession of births and re-births, upon the white lily of spiritual well-being; which is the elixir of life of the bride *Vidyā*, which swells the ocean of bliss; which gives the chanter the fullest enjoyment of that Divine Love at the utterance of each word and which bathes the mind and the senses in the Divine Bliss."



The watchword of all well-being, of all moral good is not 'I' but 'thou'. Who cares whether there is a heaven or a hell, who cares if there is a soul or not, who cares if there is an unchangeable or not? Here is the world, and it is full of misery. Go out into it as Buddha did, and struggle to lessen it or die in the attempt. Forget yourselves; this is the first lesson to be learnt, whether you are a theist or an atheist, whether you are an agnostic or a Vedantist, a Christian or a Mohammedan. The one lesson obvious to all is the destruction of the little self and the building up of Real Self.

—Swami Vivekananda

Read and Digest

When a man loves God so much, his forefathers rejoice,
the gods dance, and the earth gets a Master!

X

X

X

Pleasure will come—good: who forbids? Pain will come: welcome that too. A mosquito was sitting on a bull's horn; then his conscience troubled him and he said, "Mr. Bull, I have been sitting here a long time. Perhaps I annoy you, I am sorry, I will go away." But the bull replied—"Oh, no, not at all! Bring your whole family and live on my horn; what can you do to me?"

X

X

X

O God, O Law, O Truth, let this head and heart be instantaneously rent asunder, if any other connection lodges there but Thee. Let this blood be curdled immediately, if any other idea flows in the arteries and veins along with it but Thee.

X

X

X

Learn the art of educating your unconscious day by day, by the practice of prayer, *Japa*, meditation, study of scriptures and selfless service of humanity.

X

X

X

Let not Thy mind run after the things of this world, for they are empty as dreams. Give Thy mind to Me, devote Thyself to Me, meditate on Me.



Where the Lord Himself Imparts the Mantra of Salvation

(Continued from page 998)

—C. V. Bhimasankaram

Bath of the Lord—

The most fascinating aspect of Varanasi is life on the river front at dawn. Pilgrims inspired by their faith that their manes (*Pitrs*) flock to the river side *Ghāṭas* (stepped embankments) for the ablutions and salutations to the sun, during that time.

ब्राह्मे मुहूर्ते मणिकर्णिकायां
स्नात्वा समाराधयति स्वमेव।

अस्पृश्यसंस्पर्शविशोधनाय

कलौ नराणां कृपया हिताय॥

(*Sanatkumāra Samhitā*)

"In *Kaliyuga*, all demerits that may arise from touching untouchable objects is removed by Lord Śiva Himself, who, in His mercy, takes a daily bath at *Maṇikarnikā* in the early hours of the day for the benefit of humanity."

Contemporary Worship—

At this time—when the Lord is taking His bath at *Maṇikarnikā*—what actually is taking place in the *sanctum sanctorum* of the temple?...a multi dollar question.

The *Viśvarūpadarśana* or *Maṅgala Āraṭī* is held before sunrise, at three in the morning, an hour before the temple opens its doors to the devotees. The night *Śṛṅgāra* is removed and the *Liṅgam* is bathed with *Pañcāmṛta*, which consists of milk, curd, honey, ghee and sugar and Gaṅgā water. The sacred thread, *Yajñopavīta*, rice and *Bhasma* (brought from *Maṇikarnikā*) are offered. Fragrant sandal-

wood paste is smeared on the *Liṅgam* and it is decorated with *Bela* leaves and garland of seasonal flowers, *Dhūpa* is burned. Food in the form of milk and sweets is offered and an *Āraṭī* of camphor is performed. The *Pūjā* with *Puṣpāñjali*, when the flowers are showered upon the *Liṅgam* to the chant of Vedic *Mantras*. (One can notice that there is a close relationship between this *Pūjā* and the method of salvation attained at *Maṇikarnikā*, as described above. But what sort of relation? It is left to the readers to investigate into this matter deeply.)

So there is no wonder, if hundreds flock to Kashi everyday to pass the twilights of their lives, convinced that when the time comes to make the great crossing, Śiva Himself will whisper to them the *Tāraka Mantra* and thus ensure their passage to heaven.

काश्यां मरणान्मुक्तिः ।

(Śiva Purāṇa, Kāśī Khaṇḍa)

"Death in Kashi, means liberation from the unending cycle of birth and death."

Jñānī's Vision—

During his stay in Benaras, Rāmakṛṣṇa Paramahansa treated every particle of its earth as Śiva *Liṅga*. At the *Maṇikarnikā Ghāṭa*, the great cremation ground of the city, he actually saw Śiva, with ash covered body and tawny matted hair, serenely approaching each funeral pyre and breathing into the ears of the corpses the *Mantra* of liberation; and then the Divine Mother removing from the dead their bonds. Thus he realized the significance of the scriptural statements that anyone dying in Benaras attains salvation (*Mokṣa*) through the grace of Śiva.

Rāmakṛṣṇa saw all these things, while he was standing on a boat. Later Rāmakṛṣṇa noticed the approach of the Lord from *Maṇikarnikā* and entering into his body. Then he lost his consciousness. As a result, he was about to fall

into Gaṅgā, when fortunately, his nephew Hṛdaya caught hold of him and saved the situation.

Pattern of Death—

All roads in the city of Varanasi lead to the cremation *Ghāṭa* of *Maṇikarnikā* and Hariścandra. This is the second principal *Ghāṭa* for bathing. This is also the principal cremation *Ghāṭa*. It is heavily crowded and is very auspicious for reasons more than one.

- (1) Consecrated by Lord Viṣṇu by his penance.
- (2) Protected the universe from *Pralaya*.
- (3) Lord Himself takes his bath, making it holier.
- (4) It is said that anyone—may be a Brahmin or *Cāṇḍāla*, lettered or unlettered—after a dip in the *Maṇikarnikā* all are equally entitled to liberation.
- (5) Lord Himself whispers *Tāraka Mantra*.
- (6) *Tāraka Mantra* not only fulfils all desires but also gives liberation.

So performing *Pinḍadāna* here confers special merit. *Muktidāna* or *Muktibhavana* at Asī Ghāṭa, *Bhajanāśrama* at *Daśāśvamedha Ghāṭa*, special houses at *Maṇikarnikā Ghāṭa*—all homes are meant for salvation-seekers. They never charge even a single paisa from these seekers of death. On the other hand, they take the responsibility of performing the last rites. The very existence of such *Bhawanās* or aged-homes clearly show that death is as welcome as remuneration. It brings out very sharply the acceptance of death as an integral part of everyday life. Death is celebrated as festival like *Diwālī*. So, if one dies in Varanasi, one's death is a cause to celebrate, because Lord Yama, the God of death, is banned from the city by Śiva, who Himself imparts liberation.

The thought of death or the 'death of thoughts' is no doubt a gain, but is not then exhilaration of self-realization, but only cessation of material thoughts. It is useful to arrive

at the solution of the question (What is 'I') It purifies the thought process—an essential thing for Death-experience, which leads to salvation.

One can also see the death-pattern here. It comes in about a fortnight to those who stay in salvation home, when they stop cooking their own food, aged-ladies in particular.

Avimukta—

The city is older than time/Hinduism. It has unbroken living traditions, attracted warring gods, and conquering tribesmen, scholars and students, saints and musicians, craftsmen and traders, priests and pilgrims etc., Śiva resides in every stone of Varanasi. And some 330 million lesser gods of the Hindu pantheon find place to live about him. As many as 1270 symbols of worship, ranging from Śivaliṅgas and statues to *Kuṇḍas* and temples 'are found on the *Ghāṭas*. It is also called *Avimukta Kṣetra*.

Avimukta= unreleased= as it never perished (*Agnipurāṇa*, chapter 112).

Avimukta is person who is free from sins and one who has attained release from the bondage of human body.

Avimukteśwara is the name given to the Lord Śiva, when He whispers the *Mukti Mantra* in the ears of the devotees, who die here.

Samprādāya System—

Pilgrims go round Kashi in a circle of some fifty kilometers, starting from *Maṇikarṇikā*. This is known as *Pañca Kosī*. This starts at *Maṇikarṇikā Ghāṭa*, runs along the water front to *Asī Ghāṭa*, then round the outskirt in a large semi-circle to *Barnā Ghāṭa*. It takes 6 days to cover the entire route. The circuit is equipped with small villages, temples and *Dharmaśālās*.

It is one of the *Pañcatīrthas*—*Asī* (head), *Daśāśwa medha Ghāṭa*, *Maṇikarṇikā* (navel), *Pañcagaṅgā* (thighs), and *Ādikeśava* (feet).

Many of the city's pilgrimages, such as above, include a ritual bath at *Maṇikarnikā* and *Darśana* of Viśwanātha at both the beginning and the end.

At the end of the pilgrimage, they salute. *Siddhi Vināyaka*, one of the most popular of the 56 Gaṇeśas, and then go round of the worship at Viśwanātha and other deities.

One can see different moods of Gaṅgā—the mighty river in the world with which aspirations, struggles, renunciation and holiness of the people of Bhāratavarṣa are enmeshed. Today it is highly polluted—sewage spilling, industrial pollutants, floating dead bodies (an estimated 45,000 uncremated bodies are put in the river. Today it is one of the world's most polluted rivers. Thus Gaṅgā which has traditionally cleansed man for centuries, ironically is now being cleansed by men. It is the river that has given Varanasi its sanctity and historic importance. So the survival of Varanasi is tied to it.

Today things have drastically changed. Corruption is the way of life. International Research Bodies have proved that India is number one corrupt country. There is no doubt about it. Changing the names of historic places is quite common in these corrupt countries. Many *Ghāṭas* of Varanasi are renamed by corrupt politicians. We wonder, if the legendary *Maṇikarnikā* has a new name as "Death Industry in Varanasi." It churns out money round the clock at the expenses of salvation seekers a real death blow! *Domas* are paying income-tax running into lakhs. Even a simple dip is not allowed in this *Maṇikarnikā Kuṇḍa*, without necessary payment.

Thus the Vedic vatican which is India's spiritual capital is slowly loosing its lustre, encouraging sins of modernity.

So one should wait for the silent death.

As long as there is an intelligent thinker to know what *Maṇikarnikā* stands for, there is a hope for humanity.



Self-restraints (Yama) and Religious Observances (Niyama) As the Code of Conduct

(Continued from page 1003)

—Prof. H. C. Gaur

The bodily/verbal and mental austerities, undertaken by people with (predominantly) *Sāttvika*, *Rūjasika* and *Tāmasika* nature (*Guṇas*), result in three categories of austerities (*Tapah*). "Austerities undertaken (practised) by steadfast men with supreme faith (*Śraddhā*), by people who do not hanker after results of *Karma* (*Aphalākāṅkṣibhiḥ*) is said to be born of *Sattva* nature (*Guṇa*)" (*Gītā* XVII. 17). Śaṅkarācārya has interpreted 'faith', meaning belief in God and in the otherworld. He is unaffected by success or failure and relentlessly (using body, speech and mind) engages himself in divine endeavours. "That austerity (*Tapah*) which is practised (undertaken) with the object of earning respect, honour and reverence and ostentation (*Dambhena*), said to be born of *Rājasika* nature (*Guṇa*), is uncertain (*Calam*) and transitory (*Adhruvam*)" (*Gītā* XVII. 18). The Lord continues—"That austerity (*Tapah*) which is practised with foolish intent (*Mūḍhagrāheṇa*) by causing self-torture (to the body) or for purpose of ruining another, is said to be *Tāmasika* (born of *Tamas Guṇa*)" (*Gītā* XVII. 19). It will be seen that the austerities discussed above include several of the observances.

(Self) study (*Swādhyāya*) is the reading and understanding of scriptures with the ultimate view to emancipation (*Mokṣa*). The study (under the guidance of a *Guru*) leads to knowledge (*Jñāna*). Our scriptures have considered ".....two kinds of knowledge—one a lower (*Apara*) and the

other higher (*Para*)...." Of these the *Apara* (lower) knowledge is of scriptures, the *Para* (higher) knowledge is that from which is obtained immortality and which goes beyond the word-meaning in language. It is by which the imperishable *Brahma* is attained (*Muṇḍa. Up.* I. 1.4-5) ".....By means of higher knowledge, the wise behold everywhere, the *Brahma*" (*Muṇḍa Up.* I.1.6). *Om* (*Aum*) is the name and symbol of *Brahma*. It is said of *Om*..."The letter *Om* is indeed the (inferior) *Brahma* (*Hiraṇyagarbha*) "एतद्ध्येवाक्षरं ब्रह्म" and the letter *Om* is (also) the supreme *Brahma* (एतद्ध्येवाक्षरं परम्). Any person wishing any of the two (inferior or Supreme *Brahma*), to him comes that (*Kaṭha. Up.* I. 2.16) "any of the two" meaning if it is Supreme *Brahma* (that he desires) It becomes knowledge; if it is inferior *Brahma*, It becomes attainable. It is perhaps in this context that Vyāsa has included in self-study, a repetition of the syllable *Om*. (Also known as *Praṇava*).

Making *Īśvara* (*Īśvara Praṇidhāna*) the motive of all actions (*Karma*) would mean doing *Karma* to fulfil the purpose of the Lord. It is to be drawn to Him for devotion. The expression *Īśvara Praṇidhāna* has been used by Patañjali in another context also "as the feeling of omnipotence of God" (*Y.S.* I. 23), as a special means for attaining to trance (*Samādhi*). How does one go ahead with this? The Lord has Himself given the way—"Whatever you do (*Karma*), whatever you eat, whatever you offer in sacrifice (*Yajña*), whatever you gift away (*Dāna*), whatever austerity (*Tapah*) you practise....do it as an offering to Me" (*Gītā* IX. 27).

This, in a nutshell, is to be conduct of a devotee and in the terminology of devotion, is nearly the same as the principle of *Brahmārpaṇa* (oblation of *Brahma* as offered by *Brahma* in the fire of *Brahma* (*Gītā* IV. 24).

The *Karma* includes day to day (spontaneous) activities including eating, offer of sacrifice (*Yajña*), giving away

of charity (*Dāna*) practice of austerity and penance (*Tapah*). But in all these activities we have to have faith (*Śraddhā*) in Him. S. Cidbhavānanda (The *Bhagavadgītā*, p. 514) commenting on the above verse said—".....In this verse is presented the panacea of all evil of earthly life....to metamorphose the human into divine.....the self-seeking to self-denial.....with practice of austerity, with self interest, making of gift for self-advertisement to doing these for the glory of the Lord....". It may be noted that the last three viz., offer in sacrifice, giving of gifts and observing austerities are also the three prescribed duties for all (*Gītā* XVIII. 5).

We have to realize that we have to do *Karma* all the time "No one can ever refrain from doing some *Karma* even for a moment; everyone is helplessly driven to action (*Karma*) by *Guṇas* born out of *Prakṛti* (*Gītā* III. 5). Activity is, therefore, a must. It is not a question of doing or not doing; it is inherent in the nature of a being. But if action is not to be associated with the result of action (*Karma Phala*), the Lord tells the way to make it (*Karma*) as an offering to Him.

Fill thy mind with Me (*Manmanā Bhava*), (be) devoted to Me (*Mad Bhaktaḥ*), (do) sacrifice unto Me (*Madyājī*), bow down to Me (*Namaskuru Mām*), thus having thy mind steadfast in Me (*Yuktvā Mām*), and accepting Me as the supreme goal (*Matparāyaṇa*), you shall (certainly) attain (come to) Me (*Gītā* IX. 34).

In this verse, the Lord briefly tells the way to pray. The mind (*Mana*), devotion (*Bhakti*), sacrifice (*Yajña*) and homage (*Namaskuru*) are to be focused on the Lord alone and always. The concept of mental discipline, devotion (*Bhakti*) and non-attached actions (*Karma*) which is worship and *Yajña* are integrated (brought together).

The main theme is to have the Lord as the supreme goal, the motive of all actions (*Īśwarapranīdhāna*) and to

be one with Him. The Gaṅgā river gives itself completely (surrenders) to the ocean without any conditions and becomes one with it, completely losing its identity: the name (*Nāma*) and form (*Rūpa*), so much so that after having merged with the ocean, it cannot give its devotees even a drop of (sweet) sacred water (*Gaṅgā Jala*). Likewise, the devotee too loses his identity and becomes one with the Lord. This is the ultimate in *Bhakti Yoga*. **Concept of contrary thoughts (*Pratipakṣa Bhāvanā*) in practice of *Yama* and *Niyama*—**

There are always obstacles in the path of virtue. During the practice of restraints (*Yama*) and observances (*Niyama*), sinful thoughts invariably crop up. These have to be subdued or counteracted by contrary/opposite thoughts (*Pratipakṣa Bhāvanam*). How does this thinking on the contrary arise?

"The sins are the *Kriyās* causing of injury to others. They are done, caused to be done and permitted to be done; they are preceded by avarice (*Lobha*), anger (*Krodha*) and ignorance (*Moha*). They may be slight, middling (*Madhya*) or intense. The fruits of action (*Phala*) cause excessive pain. From these comes the habit of thinking to the contrary (*Viparīta Bhāvanā*)" (Y.S. II. 34).

Vyāsa has pointed out that avarice (*Lobha*), anger (*Krodha*) and ignorance (*Moha*) have threefold modifications (Slight, moderate and intense) leading to 27 modifications of injury. Again each modification could be threefold, e.g., slightly mild, moderately-mild, intensely-mild and so on. This leads to a total of 81 descriptions. The contrary tendency consists in the notion that these cause unnecessary, infinite pain and untrue cognition to others and it is this idea that causes the habit of contrary thoughts.

What are the attainments of those established in restraints (*Yama*)?—

"When the habit of Ahimsā is practised, hostilities are given up. When one is established in truth, action (*Kriyā*) and the fruit of action (*Kriyāphala*) depend on him. His actions (*Kriyā*) signify virtue and the results of their fruition (*Kriyāphala*) is going to heaven and these depend on him. When the habit of non-stealing (*Asteya*) is established, all gems/jewels (*Ratnas*) come to him. When Abstinence (celibacy) is practised, vigour accrues to him. When non-covetousness is established, the knowledge of how-of-birth comes to him" (Y.S. II. 35—39).

"When non-covetousness is established" is interpreted by Vyāsa to mean knowledge of questions as: Who was I?, Who am I? What shall I be? How was I? What is this? How is this? etc. These are the desires of knowing the nature of his own existence (own self, *Swarūpa*) in the past, present and future.

What are the attainments when one is established in observances (*Niyama*)?—

"By cleanliness to one's body" one feels disgusted with the dirt. He realizes that it does not remain pure, even though it is constantly been cleaned. How does he think of contact with the body of others, when his own body is so impure? Śaṅkarācārya has condemned the (gross) body to create the sense of detachment with it. "This gross body is most offensive, as it were. It is composed of skin, flesh, blood vessels, fat, marrow, and bones and is ever filled with urine and faecal matter" (V.C. 7). He loses attachment with the body (*Deha*) and becomes restrained in himself. By cleaning the impurities of the mind (*Mana*), that which is thus pure becomes, one-pointed and the senses (which are dependant on the mind) are brought under control and he becomes fit for knowledge of the Self (*Ātma Darśana*).

The joy due to suppression of desires (from contentment) is the acquisition of extreme happiness (संतोषादनुत्तमः सुखलाभः).

Vyāsa said: whatever is the pleasure in the world of desires, and of whatever the great happiness in the world of heavens, they do not come (even) to the sixteenth part of the joy due to suppression of desires. By (the purificatory actions, the *Tapah*) leading to removal of impurities of thoughts, leads to attainment of *Siddhi* and by self-study (*Svādhyāya*) one gets the communion with his deity. Vyāsa has interpreted it thus: "The gods, *Rṣis* and *Siddhas* become visible to him who is given to study and they do partake in his work". The attainment of trance (*Samādhi*) is easy for a person who, having made *Īśwara* the motive of all actions (*Īśwarapraṇidhāna*) dedicates all to *Īśwara*" (Y.S. II. 40–45).



इमाः सोम्य नद्यः पुरस्तात्प्राच्यः स्यन्दन्ते पश्चात्पृथीच्यस्ताः
समुद्रात्समुद्रमेवापियन्ति स समुद्र एव भवति ता यथा तत्र न
विदुरियमहमस्मीयमहमस्मीति

एवमेव खलु सोम्येमाः सर्वाः प्रजाः सत आगम्य न विदुः सत
आगच्छामह इति इह त व्याघ्रो वा सिंहो वा वृको वा वराहो वा कीटो
वा पतङ्गो वा दंशो वा मशको वा यद्यद्भवन्ति तदाभवन्ति

"O good looking one, these eastward rivers flow to the east, and westward rivers flow to the west, (they rise) from the sea and merge in the sea itself. They become one with the sea. As they do not realize there, 'I am this (river)', 'I am this (river)', in this very way indeed, O good-looking one, all these creatures having come from Existence, do not realize, "We have come from Existence." Whichever creatures they were here (in this world)—whether tiger, lion, wolf, pig, insect, grasshopper, gadfly, or mosquito, they become that.

—*Chāndogyaopaniṣad* (VI. 10. 1-2)

For Youth

Glory of Self-Confidence

—Chandan Lal Dhody

The mad ox was running fast. "This bull has run amok; be out of his way", shouted a man. The people ran helter skelter to avoid being hit by the ox. But a little girl stood firm where she was. When advised to run away, replied she: "To flee like cowards is not the way to tackle this situation. The beast should be brought under control." "But who will face him; who will bell the cat?" "I will", said she with great confidence. With the name of God at her lips, she went to the bull, caught hold of him by the horn, and patted him affectionately. Lo! responding to her loving gestures, the beast kept standing meekly to the amazement of all. She tied him to a nearby tree and fed with green grass which he ate with great relish. The entire village admired her marvellous valour. That little lass later became famous as Rānī Lakṣmī Bāī of Jhansi who bravely sacrificed her life while fighting in India's war for independence in 1857, and about whom the British commander observed: "She was the wisest and the bravest of them all."



God has no favourites in this world; He loves each of us as much as He loves the greatest saints. They receive more only because they give more and are thereby more receptive.

—Self-Realization

Fear-psychosis and Sanskrit Tradition

—*Rajesh Kumar Dwivedi*

Rightly stated that much had been professed about the characteristics of 'fearlessness' in Hindu traditions deeply rooted in Vedic scriptures and in contrast, the tales of fear-psychosis in Satya Nārāyaṇa Kathā is also sermonised. There is no way but to humbly accept the charge with a wonder on the inference derived in and balled on.

What purpose has the fear-psychosis served and what side-effect has it perpetuated? Common experiences of human-history meticulously indicate that the elements of clarity, aptness and rationale are naturally crowned in all the potential concepts. The applications of fear-psychosis are just like tools to apply ample leverage to meet out any target-objective. Hence this target-objective is the key or the seed element we have to bother for. It is important to assess to what extent this target-objective is sacrosanct and how far it is exclusive to the mankind.

Instead taking the prevailing pattern in right perspective by estimating its qualities committed to survival of lone living free culture, it has become much in fashion to wreck vengeance on roots of Hindu *Dharma* by putting it responsible for every grave issue boiling in the society. Astonishingly, these nefarious offences are being propelled in support of nascent, still untested, new world order. The gambit of criticising natural borne traditions are being performed all over the world by revolutionary materialistic intellectuals who are ready to shatter the philosophy which

they deem unsuitable for the reasons they best know. They also picked enchanting slogans like 'Equality and rationality (without assessing what for and how far they stand) which are sufficient to shut up anybody overtly. One can strongly perceive these chaotic aspects as ironical symptom of virtual slumbering social conscience. How can any true awakened person support such delinquent order to tarnish the valuable heritage conserved by our sage ancestors. The conception of these lucrative concepts are examinable for a right and earnest approach.

The sun shines equally to all. The wind blows equally to all. *Prabhu Kṛpā* is available equally to all *Bhaktas*. But all these bounties are being gathered in different proportions by individuals. Thus it is more apt to invoke for ample opportunities which could help to grow one to give optimum height of efficiency. Are they convincingly acquainted with these attributes? Likewise, the drumming of vague—scientificity is uproared everywhere. Recently in U.K. they had tried to convert *Sāttvika* (vegetarian) mother-cow to a *Tāmasika* (non-vegetarian) by supplying scientific food for want of more beef but in reaction mad-cow-disease broke out. What sort of rationale is it? Let the pseudo-rationalists answer following three simple questions—What is the depth of space? What is the value of number divided by zero? Where were they one hundred years ago? The reasoning cannot be delimited by narrow reasoning. As there is no vessel to conserve the energy of the sun, similarly there is no reasoning which could put boundaries to the reasoning. Ours are very less knowing civilizations. It is sheer foolishness to brisk on limited understanding and challenge the mighty, omnipresent dimensions. The aura of reasoning can be well compared with the focus of light in a dark night. The focus of light shines the object but beyond the encircled light, an infinite

range is left to shimmer. When we unduely base on limited focus of reasoning we mistake if we ignore the rest which is more in bulk.

All the time, whenever needed and suited, an overhauling in the pattern is essential with the help of adequate feedback which has been the whole spirit of our Sanskrit tradition for long back. The sustainable natural pattern must be mounted as a perfect inheritance substitute in succession. The natural selection of Sanskrit tradition should never be lacking the element of suitability otherwise it will prove disastrous to 'pure human beings' popularly known as Hindus. The changes because of retained jealousy and complexes will never yield fruitful results. The change must be imparted with essential elements of Sanskrit order i.e., reform without loosing the worth and grace of perpetual essence (*Sanātana Tattva*).

While commenting in critical study on *Upaniṣads*, Sukumar Azhicode of Calicut University wrote amazingly that all the dictum in world took off only our performance is shown in reverse. It can be seen how long this statement of an acumen is resembling with that of above charges. To the reasons this statement seems to be meant for a narrow view. Interestingly, it is an established fact that the cultural winds contemporary to Vedic era and even thereafter in different parts of the world are remained as ashes stories of mankind. The past of Greeks, Romans and Egyptians had been, in toto, replaced by sametic-religions. The prodigious country of *Lao-tse* and Confucious is now communist China. What to say more, at no cost, these are ascents in any manner. Yes, we were overthrown by those reactionary, jealous forces many times and even uprooted for good but we regained the lost paradise every time and are sole representative of pure mankind far from any reservations and jeopardy. Meanwhile, during the process

of resistances and revivals the physical form eloped but the essence remained with us in the form of *Nārāyaṇa* is *Satya*. Our ancestors fought the dark era of past with this light of *Satya Nārāyaṇa*. Except Hindus no other group of mankind can raise its head against its embraced doctrine. That means nobody else can wave his hand against his respective fear psychosis. Only Hindus are set free to question and to postulate.

The historical commitment of human society propounded that "Bad culture roots out the good-culture if the bad culture is not refrained to do so." How can we refrain the societies by divulging in bad culture? The rescue from perverting is possible only by Sanskrit order what we opted for in past and could survive gracefully to date. Is it not true that worldwide others' fear-psychosis are weeding out the natural cultures of mankind? Is our so-called fear psychosis serving the same end? No. Is our so-called fear psychosis so dreaded and frightened which could stop you to question? No. We hardly see any distinction amongst mankind and always happily utter to 'pure human being', the domain where the crisis is surpassing critically throughout the world. We feel gratitude to those Hindus who kept live the streams of *Veda* by virtue of their sacrifices against the mischievous offences of non-culturists. We ought to sway for Sanskrit order of mankind streamlined from *Anādi-Veda* to *Ananta Veda* with fuller caution lest we quarrel on the points not required for it all. Let we pray "असतो मा सद् गमय, मृत्योर्मा अमृतं गमय, तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय" and wish a vibrant mankind unabatedly flagging for 'What is OK that is OK.'



Śarad Pūrṇimā

—Shree Bhaisab

It was a moonlit night. Śrī Kṛṣṇa played on His flute in a forest. The *Gopīs* heard the music. It was inviting. It was irresistible. Was it music or magic? It had cast such a spell on them!

The *Gopīs* immediately set out for where their bewitching beloved was. They were all running in the same direction—in His direction. But none wasted a second in whispering it to another: they could not afford to waste time to suffer Him wait a moment more than necessary.

Some *Gopīs* were serving meals to their husbands; others milk to children. Some were regaling guests; others dining in the kitchen. They left everything where it was. Their food was half cooked or milk half boiled, it was left to its fate. If aught in hand, they left it there midway.

The *Gopīs* cared not for their clothes; who could think of cosmetics? They looked not to their dishevelled hair or to ornaments wrongly worn; who could think of mirror or make up? They just ran to the loving feet of the Lord; they ran to catch but a glimpse of His lotus face, of Him who was their life-blood, of Him who was their very heart and soul.

And when Kṛṣṇa—the playful, suddenly disappeared, they went about in search forest to forest, their eyes looking for Him in a thousand directions. To the trees and grass, they talked about Him. Of hills and rills, they enquired of Him. Of deers and creepers, they asked of Him. For Him, they moved the earth and the heaven. His *Līlās*—they

imitated. They began to believe—to feel that they themselves were Kṛṣṇa. So were they lost in Him. So did they lose all notions of time and place.

In the long quest, they got into the thick of the jungle. They beat a retreat afraid lest Kṛṣṇa hide deeper in the darker jungle and thorns prick His lotus feet. They retraced their steps: They returned to the bank of river Jamunā. They sat there and sang in chorus about their alder liefest. Tears trickling down their eyes sought His return—the return of the loving lover lost.

The Master of all but the servant of love, He came back to them. He held them to His heart to their heart's content, nay to His own heart's content ! The Divine and the devoted were united in ineffable ecstasy.

If we want to win Śrī Kṛṣṇa's heart, we need develop the frame of mind—the mental attitude—of the *Gopīs*.

—Sender Manmohan Gupta



You must not be discouraged even a bit by repeated failures. You should know the causes which brought about the failures and should be careful in future to avoid them. You will have to fortify yourself carefully. In your weakness lies the secret of your strength. You will have to stick doggedly to your ideals, convictions and *Sādhana* despite repeated failures, and march boldly on the path. Say—"Come what may, I will surely come out with perfect success in this spiritual struggle. I will realise the Self in this very birth, nay, this very second. Failures or slips cannot in anyway affect me."

—Swami Sivananda

What is the Sweetest thing in this World?

—H. Srinivas

"Mankind is helped in its progress almost as much by the study of imperfection as by the contemplation of perfection. Had we nothing before us in our futile and halting lives but saints and their ideal, we might fail altogether."

In our ignorance and perversity our eyes become blind as those of the owl at day time to the sunshine of the grace of God.

In a village in Madura (S. India) a boy prodigy named Yāmuna, (Who later became the famous Alavndār) one of the premier Vaishnavite teachers of South India, was born of poor Brahmin parents in 1150. It was the will of God to teach humanity the great Truth that divine grace is no one's exclusive monopoly, and that Divine Will must prevail over that of man. In his tenth year the boy Yāmuna lost his father. According to the ancient custom, he was put in charge of a Pandit to undergo a course of training. It was observed that Yāmuna's intellect was so precocious as to enable him to gain mastery of all the *Śāstras* at a very early age. One day when the Pandit was away there came to the *Gurukula* a court Pandit, who had a very 'high-sounding title' which need not be mentioned here. He was a very reputed Pandit, but full of arrogance and extreme self-conceit, which is, unfortunately a common weakness among such scholars. The *Guru* had to pay a tribute to the King and it was to remind him that the court

Pandit had come. The boy Yāmuna interfered in the absence of his teacher and said that the tribute could no longer be paid, and that if necessary a debate might be arranged, at which, he (the boy) felt certain that the court Pandit would be defeated. When the *Guru* returned, he was terrified and perplexed at the boy's unusual behaviour, he himself feeling diffident about the success of the debate, and the serious evil consequences that might ensue therefrom. Yāmuna, the boy prodigy said—"Sir, fear not. When the challenge comes from the court Pandit, please accept it. You can say that you are ashamed to debate with him but that you are sending one of your *Śiṣyas*, and that too a small boy in his teens! With some hesitation the King consented to the debate and the boy prodigy was summoned to the court. When the court assembled, the boy with his bright face was an object of surprise and admiration. The King offered half his kingdom to the boy prodigy if he was successful in the debate.

The court Pandit said—"Silly boy! Do you know the alphabets? Do you even know to write your own name? Can you sit as my equal in this august gathering? You, you stand there and answer my questions."

The boy Yāmuna challenged and implored the conceited Pandit to put him any question he liked. Upon this, the court Pandit thought for a while and said—"You are a child. What question shall I put to you? I am puzzled at the very start. However, let me ask you a simple question—can you tell me what is the sweetest thing in this world?"

Yāmuna In a humble, prayerful mood answered—"O, great Pandit, the greatest, sweetest thing in this world is to utter the Name of God. What else can be truly called sweet? I shall go to the extent of saying that the only sweet thing in the world is the Lord's Name."

Court Pandit: "Let me put you another question. What is the most wonderful thing in this world?"

Yāmuna: "The most wonderful thing in this world is *Māyā*. This is the mysterious *Śakti* which impels deluded souls to think that they know everything, that they are great and that they are powerful. It is *Māyā* that feeds arrogance, self-conceit and pride in men of learning like you, though the scriptures declare that even *Brahma-Jñānīs* (Self-realized souls) think they do not know anything."

Upon this the conceited court Pandit invited the boy Yāmuna to put him any questions he liked.

Yāmuna: "I shall set forth three statements—deny them if you can. First, I say your mother is not barren, secondly that the king is virtuous, and thirdly that the queen is a chaste lady."

The court Pandit blinked and thought: "These appear to me to be statements of fact. My mother cannot be barren because she has given birth to me. How can I deny that the King is virtuous, or that the queen is chaste, without dire consequences? This boy has put me in a tight corner!"

It was obvious that the court Pandit could not deny these statements, and he was silent.

Upon this the boy Yāmuna went on: "It has been demonstrated before the court that the learned court Pandit cannot deny these statements. I shall now have my say. One tree cannot make a grove. Similarly, a woman who has given birth to only one son cannot be deemed to be other than a barren woman. Panditjī is the only son of his mother—hence I argue that she is barren! Now as regards my second statement, the scriptures declare that the king shares all the sins of his subjects. Thus he has to carry the heaviest load of sin. Thus it is I say that the King cannot be truly virtuous! Now I shall, turn to the third statement. Every woman O, King, is first offered to Agni

(god of Fire), Varuṇa (god of water), and Indra, (Lord of the Angels) at the time of her marriage and then only to the man who is later termed her husband. Thus she cannot be said to be chaste."

All were agreeably surprised, and the King at once embraced the boy prodigy and ear-marked half the kingdom to him. He later became known as the famous Saint Alavandār of Madura.



Firstly, you treat yourself to be different from what you really are. You are virtually committing suicide. You think yourself to be limited to your body alone, which you are certainly not.

Secondly, you presume God to be something quite different from the all pervading Reality, treating Him as something personal, finite and limited and other than yourself. This is not the way to realize the Truth. Of course, you have first to understand what you really are and then alone you will be able to realize God. You will, then, instantly enjoy the sweetness of eternal bliss and attain perfect equanimity. All your doubts will, then, be cleared.

—Swami Rama Tirtha

While performing the *Japa*, the *Sādhaka* should dwell on the meaning of these Divine Names, and should believe that the all-pervading divinity has appeared before him in the form of the Name. This gives ineffable joy and peace of mind. Or else the *Sādhaka* should keep his mind fixed on the Divine Form of the Lord—His *Iṣṭa Deva*.

—Jayadayal Goyandka

Story

Ignorance

"Prominent merchant commits suicide" appeared as headline in the newspaper. The running details were as under—Mr.....a leading merchant of the town took poison and ended his life as he could not bear the shock of suffering a loss of so many crores in his business. He found out that he had only two crores left for him. The heavy loss and the shock was too much for him to bear. He left a suicide note narrating the cause of suicide. He was so much dreaded of poverty that the death appeared to him as the only means to escape from miseries. His name, address and biodata, the readers read in the paper with great interest.

A mixed social reaction: O, the poor soul! Only two crores! He had no other way. A multimillionaire rolling in the money. Only two crores. Nothing for him. Some other people questioned about his sanity of mind. Had two crores left? It is not an insignificant amount. How many persons are there in the society having two crores? Should they all commit suicide? Anyway the paper published the news, the readers read the columns with interest and inquisitiveness to a certain extent.

"An idiot, that is what the merchant was" reacted Nirañjana. Nirañjana could not afford to buy a paper but he is some sort of an addict. So he goes to a shopkeeper and reads the paper. After going through the columns he spontaneously blurted out as if talking to himself—"A millionaire, earning so much, so clever in social dealing

and business has proved to be a fool like this!"

"What foolishness did he commit?" The shopkeeper asked. He is a social, liberal and of thinking nature. He said while looking at Nirañjana—"We all commit such foolishness everyday. How many of us are satisfied with our circumstances? If all of a sudden we have to face a grievous situation, well, how many of us are there who will not be shocked? For a beggar, two rupees in somebody's pocket are as important as for us the remaining two crores of that foolish merchant who committed suicide, are."

"And the person having two rupees in his pocket is equally fool; is it not so? Nirañjana, retorted turning towards the shopkeeper.

"We all look at the upper strata. That is our basic mistake and the root cause of our restiveness" said the shopkeeper quite undisturbed "If we cast a glance at people belonging to the lower strata, there will be no cause of our mental unrest. After all those are also human beings who live their lives alongwith their family in a hutment quite dilapidated and work throughout the day in the scorching heat of May and June. What speciality do we possess that we cannot pull on as they do? That merchant was not a fool because he died on account of heavy loss suffered by him. He was a fool because he accumulated so much money that he could not spare sufficient time to take even food or answer the call of the nature without being worried. He had telephone connections even in his dining room and toilet also. That was his life routine. And the beauty of the thing was that he was not allowed by his attendant physicians to take anything other than a cup of vegetable soup without even salt and spices. Now think of it, my friend, he could enjoy (if there was any enjoyment really) only that cup of soup twice in twenty-four hours. It is for this much that he was meeting heaven and earth together. Isn't it a limit of foolishness."

The shopkeeper was serious and he continued, "We are all the same. Everyone of us is busy like a spider in worthless pursuits and we try to complete them for the sake of nothing. It is a different thing that we may not get an opportunity to fulfil our foolish desires. You know what we actually require is a little amount of food to fill the belly and a small hut to provide some shade. But how many amongst us do not desire to accumulate wealth and who does not dream to have a big and grand bungalow?

"Oh, if you start thinking on such a pattern how much we can minimise our worries? How much peace will the man get? It is a wonder why the man does not think in this way." Nirañjana bent his head and soliloquised."

"Because we are all fools" said the shopkeeper and burst into laughter.

Nirañjana got startled—fools! All of us? Well, it was the startling statement. All the philosophers, scientists, politicians, sociologists such eminent persons are all fools. It is very natural to question the mental health of a person who declares everybody to be a fool. Should such a person not get his brain medically checked up? But today Nirañjana could not sidestep the statement, Whatever he heard, was churning his mind.

X

X

X

"I am going to the temple for *Darśana*" Nirañjana regularly visits the temple. Today he could not find any charm in reading the newspaper.

If you just wait for two minutes, I will keep company with you" after all a shopkeeper does require sometime to close and lock the shop.

"Will you go without proper clothing as you are? The shopkeeper is a strange one. He will put half of his *Dhoti* on one of his shoulders and move around unmindful of mannerism and what anybody will say of him.

"In such a hot weather is it not enough?" He smiled and said further, "suppose I put on a shirt what difference will it make? Certainly it will not give me any comfort; on the contrary it will inconvenience me; to presume what others will say is a self-deception. Take it for granted that nobody has time and inclination to mark in the crowd whose shoes are shining or who is naked.

Nirañjana received another shock. He was compelled to make some serious thinking—"How real the statement is and what a fool we make of ourselves when while going out of the house we meticulously check up our apparel and feel if we are presentable or not. And the beauty is that we ourselves do not at all pay any attention to the appearance of others.

Only the uncommon or unusual becomes the focus of our attention but what gain or loss is there? What if somebody notices our presence or not? Why do we bother about how people think of us? What is the purpose?"

Well, if this is the pattern of your thinking then don't. We do most of the things aimlessly" said Nirañjana.

"Most assuredly "the shopkeeper clarified."For those useless things we worry ourselves; take trouble and more often than not we get harmed even then we mechanically do them."

"Why will somebody do a harmful act?" Nirañjana questioned.

"Just see what can you gain by having your body loaded with heavy garments in the summer season" was the counter question from the shopkeeper.

"Fashion....."Nirañjana stopped himself at that. He himself realised that in most cases the fashion is synonym of the foolishness and how interesting it is that it is taken as an emblem of civilization. In the name of fashion we attend parties and eat and drink so many things which are

nothing but injurious to the bodily health. Not only that it is in the name of fashion that we behave most uncivilizedly and we think that we are being civilized.

"Education is spreading, civilization is getting enriched and the society is progressing. "Nirañjana presented his logic in the antidirection. To him it appeared that the fertile brains of the society will somehow remove this ignorance also.

"Side by side the foolishness is also multiplying and now the narration is complete. Society is no doubt progressing but progressing from light to darkness; from knowledge to ignorance and that too very speedily."

Do you mean to say that the entire intelligentsia is fool? Said Nirañjana irritatingly.

"Look, What is happening? All the top rank scientists are busy in their research. What research? They are devilishly busy to invent a most effective instrument to destroy the entire humanity instantaneously. Do you still feel that some logic is needed to prove whether the civilization is running from death to immortality or from immortality to death?"

"Rendering service to the society is the only aim of science" Nirañjana relayed his bookish knowledge.

"What do you mean by service? If you delve deep you will find that inventing unnecessary gadgetry is no service at all. You know that there is no end of desires and these inventions only help in increasing our desires. What is really needed is minimisation of wants. This can be done through serious thinking of pros and cons. But the real trouble is we don't want to do any serious thinking. Still we call ourselves learned, wise and what not.

X

X

X

This shopkeeper gentleman is of a strange type. People may call him impracticable or even crazy. Highly educated, a law graduate but refused to practise law because it

involved falsehood and untruth. Sold the entire paternal property and opened stationary shop selling the articles with a very reasonable margin of profit. Even when the other shopkeepers stored the mercantile goods as the prices went on soaring high but he was not at all affected. He never bothered for his chance gain. Whether inflation or deflation both were equal to him. He wholly depended on his fate.

One day Nirañjana invited him on dinner. He accepted the invitation with certain conditions. No chilly, no spices; no this; no that etc., etc. While taking food when Nirañjana served some item unwanted he said "See you have spoiled the item. I cannot take it because by eating excess it will spoil my system and itself it will get spoiled. If I leave it, at least it may come in the use of beasts and birds. It is very unwise to stuff the stomach for the sake of taste and relish. You know about the merchant who was compelled to live on the vegetable's soup without salt or spices. Is it not foolishness to give undue importance to sense objects? Take it for granted that excessive load will certainly benumb that particular sense-organ. This social tendency of obtaining more and more is not a result of proper thinking and selection. It is a foolishness on our part."

X

X

X

"Why do you call the whole world foolish "Nirañjana seriously objected. Today he is determined to thoroughly understand whether what he says is right or he is a whimsical person.

"What is your opinion; everybody is wise?"

"Not at all. The really wise men are rare. The very world itself is a product of ignorance. Therefore all worldly transactions are caused by ignorance and so are the worldly men."

"Well, foolishness is the other name of what we call ignorance. We use the bookish language but we do not

appreciate it that is the real difficulty."

"What do you mean by ignorance."

"I mean the incapability of proper thinking, foolishness, not knowing or anyother name that may appeal to you. It is not a thing that requires *Samādhi* to remove it. It can well be removed by appreciating anything in its right perspective."

"The scriptures say that the world is a result of ignorance."

"Yes, the scriptures are perfectly right. Most of the worldly transactions continue because we are fools. We never think the ins and outs of what we do. We know that our attachment to the sense-objects is wrong and harmful. Yet we are blindly rushing headlong towards it."

Such scholars, such thinkers and all of them are devoid of the discerning faculty! Why does it so happen?"

"In other words what is the nature and form of ignorance and the cause behind it."

"Exactly."

"Well, what you can know by thinking in a systematic way cannot be ignorance. Ignorance is what does not have any logical or reasonable sequence; which does not stand and vanishes before reasonable thinking. Why can't you know that ignorance is a negative stage and one cannot experience the negation. Ignorance is the absence of knowledge. It is not even incorrect knowledge because incorrect knowledge is also knowledge. It has its existence whereas ignorance is the mere absence (of knowledge).

"Are you a wise man?"

"No sir, not at all. You see this piece of log before you. Does it feel any pleasure or pain, any praise or censure? Is my body any different from that piece of log? Is it not equally inert? Yet am I not a prey to these weaknesses? How can I say I am wise?"

A few verses of *Gītā* flashed into the mind of Nirañjana:

प्रकृतेः क्रियमाणानि गुणैः कर्माणि सर्वशः ।
अहङ्कारविमूढात्मा कर्ताहमिति मन्यते ॥
(III. 27)

न कर्तृत्वं न कर्माणि लोकस्य सृजति प्रभुः ।
न कर्मफलसंयोगं स्वभावस्तु प्रवर्तते ॥
(III. 14)

And all of a sudden Nirañjana oracularly came to realize what *Ajñāna* is and how to remove it.



So when we have tried everything possible to solve our problem and nothing seems to do any good, the wisest course is simply this: Relax. Stop trying to deal with it through the limited human resources of the rationalizing mind, which has brought you to your present state of frustration and tension. Surrender the problem to the Divine with one hundred percent faith and trust. In other words, "Let go and let God."

—Self-Realization

A creature can't be proved separate from the world from any point of view such as construction, element and patronage etc. As the shape and the functions of the limbs of a body are different but they are limbs of the same body; similarly all the creatures of the world whether big or small are the parts of a gigantic body. Therefore being the parts of the gigantic body, we should work for the welfare of the gigantic body. If we work for our selfishness, we commit an error.

—Swami Ramsukhdas

The Way to end Corruption and Immorality

In this world, we on account of the fear of punishment feel hesitant to do any action against the ruling law in the presence of the ruler or his deputy or his agent or his police force and feel shy in the society for such an action, how can we dare to commit a sin or an evil action in face of God who is the king of kings and the Supreme Ruler of this vast universe. Today, in fact, it is the need of the hour that we should rouse the aforesaid faith in the omnipresence of God in the minds of the people of our society in order to eliminate the corruption and immorality which is so rampant in our society. Even our government today is growing conscious of the fact that without the end of corruption our society or nation cannot have a healthy and prosperous life. But it is a matter of great sorrow that in order to end corruption, our government is taking the help of only many legal systems and other unscriptural methods. I have, however, a firm faith that the thoughtful persons by serious deliberations will reach the conclusion that the corruption and immorality can never be rooted out only by framing laws or resorting to other legal systems. A legal system can only cover the outer activities of persons and it can have no impact over their mental feelings. The corruption and immorality on the other hand, cannot, be completely rooted out until we purify the mental feelings and outlook of the people. The scriptural words of the first *Mantra* of the *Īśāvāsyā Upaniṣad* significantly exhorts the people to perceive God pervading all the animate and inanimate things of this world.

Prayer

Almighty God, the doer of everything, the giver of good things and the inspirer of all noble ideas and ideals, without whose grace all our endeavours are useless, all our attempts fruitless, bless our deeds so that we may find enough zeal to serve the needy, help the poor, lift the downtrodden, feed the hungry and console the grief-stricken and also to earn our daily bread by the sweat of our brow.

Teach me to be completely unselfish so that I may live and work together with my fellow-men at peace. Forsaking all, let me place my whole being in Thy hands and commit my cause to Thee for divine disposal in due season for my good. Guide me in the minutest details and give me the strength for testing times. Enable me to empty my heart of all useless cares, to resist all temptations, to restrain all longings and to relinquish lust so that I may find real rest within the closet of my heart. Let not the world be too much with me lest I should be drawn away with sundry desires and moved with every wind of words. Help me to keep silence in an evil time to say that Thy Will will be done. Let my intentions be pure so that I may never find myself in the valley of despair, but pass safely through any storm. Knowing that God's grace always seeks a humble heart I bow before Thee in the quiet of this hour and lie low in Thy power so that I may learn that Truth alone makes rich and great.

—B. Srinivasa Rao